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DE RUEHTA #0811/01 1270845  
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O 070845Z MAY 09  
FM AMEMBASSY ASTANA  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5377  
INFO RUCNCIS/CIS COLLECTIVE 1557  
RUCNCLS/ALL SOUTH AND CENTRAL ASIA COLLECTIVE  
RUEHZL/EUROPEAN POLITICAL COLLECTIVE  
RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING 0934  
RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO 1637  
RUEHUL/AMEMBASSY SEOUL 0619  
RUEHAK/AMEMBASSY ANKARA 2212  
RUEHVI/AMEMBASSY VIENNA 0660  
RUCPDO/DEPT OF COMMERCE WASHDC  
RUEATRS/DEPT OF TREASURY WASHDC  
RUEHRC/DEPT OF AGRICULTURE WASHDC  
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC  
RHEFAAA/DIA WASHDC  
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC 1119  
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC 1035  
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHDC  
RHMFIUU/CDR USCENTCOM MACDILL AFB FL  
RUEHAST/USOFFICE ALMATY 1490  
RUEHPH/CDC ATLANTA

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 ASTANA 000811

SENSITIVE  
SIPDIS

STATE FOR SCA/CEN, EEB/TPP/MTA/ABT, OES/PCI  
STATE PLEASE PASS TO USTR (JDOHERTY)  
AGRICULTURE FOR OSTA (HAMILTON, BEAN) AND OCRA (MSMITH)  
ANKARA FOR FAS  
VIENNA FOR APHIS

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [EAGR](#) [ETRD](#) [ECON](#) [SENV](#) [KZ](#)

SUBJECT: KAZAKHSTAN: DEMARCHE DELIVERED ON REMOVING H1N1-RELATED  
TRADE BANS ON PORK

REF: STATE 44254

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1. (U) Sensitive but unclassified. Not for public Internet.

2. (SBU) SUMMARY: Akhmetzhan Sultanov, Vice Chairman of the Ministry of Agriculture's State Inspection Committee told us on May 6 that, in response to the H1N1 virus, the Government of Kazakhstan took preemptive steps to prevent the possible importation of infected food by banning pork and meat imports from several countries and several U.S. states. The Regional Environmental Officer (REO) delivered refel demarche informing Sultanov that, in fact, there is no H1N1 risk from the consumption of fully cooked pork and urged Kazakhstan to end its import bans. Sultanov said he was aware that the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE) has issued a "preliminary statement" that there is no evidence that the virus is transmitted by food, but the government is waiting to receive OIE's official statement before taking any action regarding lifting the ban. There currently are no cases of H1N1 in Kazakhstan. END SUMMARY.

DEMARCHE TO REMOVE BAN ON IMPORT OF PORK FROM UNITED STATES

3. (SBU) Akhmetzhan Sultanov, Vice Chairman of the Ministry of Agriculture's State Inspection Committee told the Regional Environmental Officer (REO) on May 6 that each country can obtain information on the status of its imports to Kazakhstan on the Ministry's website. Sultanov said that in response to the H1N1 virus, the Kazakhstani government took preemptive steps to prevent the possible import of "infected food," by banning pork and meat imports from Mexico, several countries in the Caribbean Basin, as

well as several U.S. states, including Texas, California, and Kansas. These measures were issued in a decree on April 27 (see full text in para 7). Sultanov said it was a "precautionary measure" to ban imports not only of pork, but of all meat and poultry from Texas, California, and Kansas, since these three states have the highest instances of registered cases of H1N1 infection in humans in the United States. REO delivered reftel demarche and left a non-paper with Sultanov informing the Kazakhstanis that the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE) issued statements on April 27 and 28 indicating that there is no risk from the consumption of fully cooked pork. REO urged the government of Kazakhstan to reconsider its decision and end import bans. (NOTE: In 2008, U.S. exports of pork to Kazakhstan reached 372 tons valued at \$982,000. U.S. poultry exports of 18,000 tons were valued at nearly \$20 million. END NOTE.)

¶4. (SBU) In addition, REO presented Sultanov with "Key Facts About Swine Influenza" from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention clearly stating that H1N1 is not transmitted by food. REO also delivered the May 2 joint statement by the U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization, the OIE, the WHO, and the WTO, stating that "pork and pork products, handled in accordance with good hygienic practices...will not be a source of infection. To date, there is no evidence that the virus is transmitted by food."

¶5. (SBU) Sultanov said he was aware of the "preliminary statement" by OIE that there is no evidence that the virus is transmitted by food. He said the government is reviewing its policy but is waiting to receive the OIE's official statement to that effect before it will consider taking any official action regarding lifting the existing ban. Currently, Kazakhstan's policy is very similar to those of Russia and Belarus, Sultanov said, and he expected that there would be close consultation with those countries on further action. (NOTE: Kazakhstan is in the process of negotiating a trilateral customs union with Russia and Belarus. END NOTE.) Post

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will continue to monitor the situation and inform Washington if Kazakhstan lifts the import bans.

#### NO H1N1 CASES IN KAZAKHSTAN

¶6. (SBU) Sultanov said Kazakhstan currently has no cases of H1N1 infection. An inter-agency committee, consisting of the Ministries of Agriculture, Health, Emergency Situations, Internal Affairs, and others, has been tasked to work out a plan of action in the event of an outbreak of H1N1 virus. It will present its plan to President Nazarbayev soon. This plan will include procedures for isolation and quarantine, prevention, and medical unit response, among other measures. The overall goal is to reduce the threat of an outbreak and its spread among the population from those who might come into contact with the H1N1 virus.

#### DECREE ON IMPORT BANS

¶7. (U) Following is the unofficial translation of the text of the import ban decree:

#### BEGIN TEXT

To: Heads of territorial inspections of oblasts, Astana, Almaty  
To: Heads of regional inspections of veterinary control on borders and transport

Decree No. 18-2-1-9/3038, dated April 27, 2009 On Swine Flu Prevention

Due to swine flu H1N1 outbreak on the territory of Mexico and the USA and with the purpose to prevent such disease spread on the territory of Republic of Kazakhstan:

¶A. The following restrictions are introduced:

-- On the entrance to the territory of the Republic of Kazakhstan and transit through its territory of meat, raw meat materials, and its processed products without thermal treatment and obtained from any animals, shipped after April 28, 2009 from Mexico and the U.S.

states of Texas, California, and Kansas.

-- On the entrance to the territory of the Republic of Kazakhstan of meat and meat products, obtained from any animals, including products with thermal treatment, in the hand-luggage and on-board food of seacraft and aircraft coming from Mexico and the U.S. states of Texas, California, and Kansas.

-- On the entrance of pork and its processed products with thermal treatment and shipped after April 28, 2009 from Guatemala, Honduras, Dominique Republic, Colombia, Costa-Rica, Cuba, Nicaragua, Panama, Salvador, as well as the U.S. states of Alabama, Arizona, Arkansas, Georgia, Kansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Florida.

1B. The present Decree is subject to foreign trade members and all structures of Committee notification.

1C. Vice Chairman of the Committee for State Inspection in Agriculture under the Ministry of Agriculture Mr. A.A. Sultanov is in charge of enforcing this Decree.

Chairman S. Suleimenov

END TEXT

MILAS